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Collaboration in School Social Work

Fall 2026 Week 05 SOWK 587

Jacob Campbell, Ph.D. LICSW at Heritage University

The Plan for Week Five

Agenda

Multi-disciplinary team meetings

Best practices and strategies for effective collaboration

MTDM Role-Play Scenarios

Intersectionality and working with diverse team members



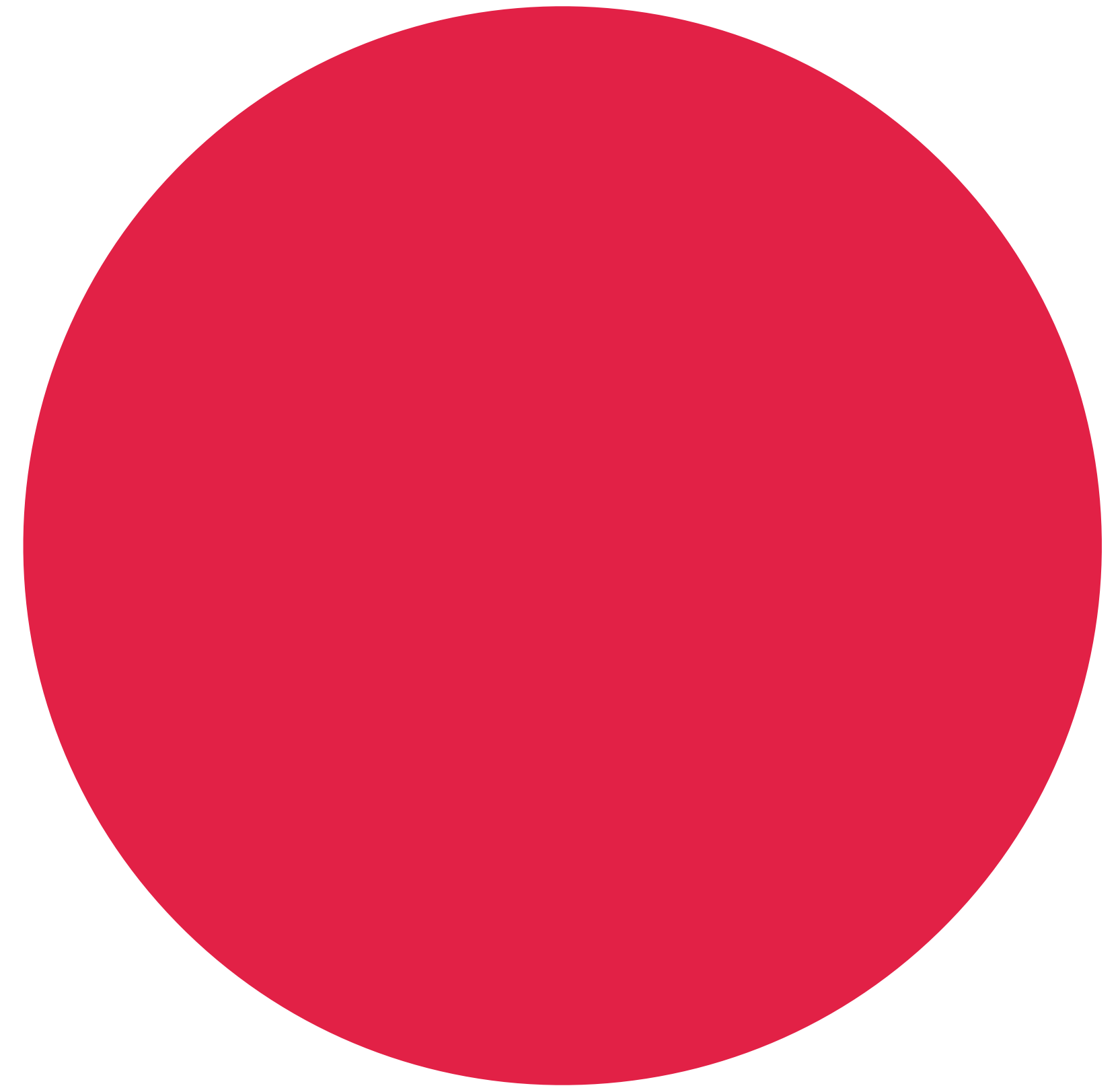
Learning Objectives

- Identify practices that are effective working in teams and strategies for implementing them
- Assess methods to develop rapport and work with diverse team members
- Implement a collaborative meeting using active listening, shared decision-making, and conflict-resolution skills

Disciplinary Perspectives

What is an MDTM?

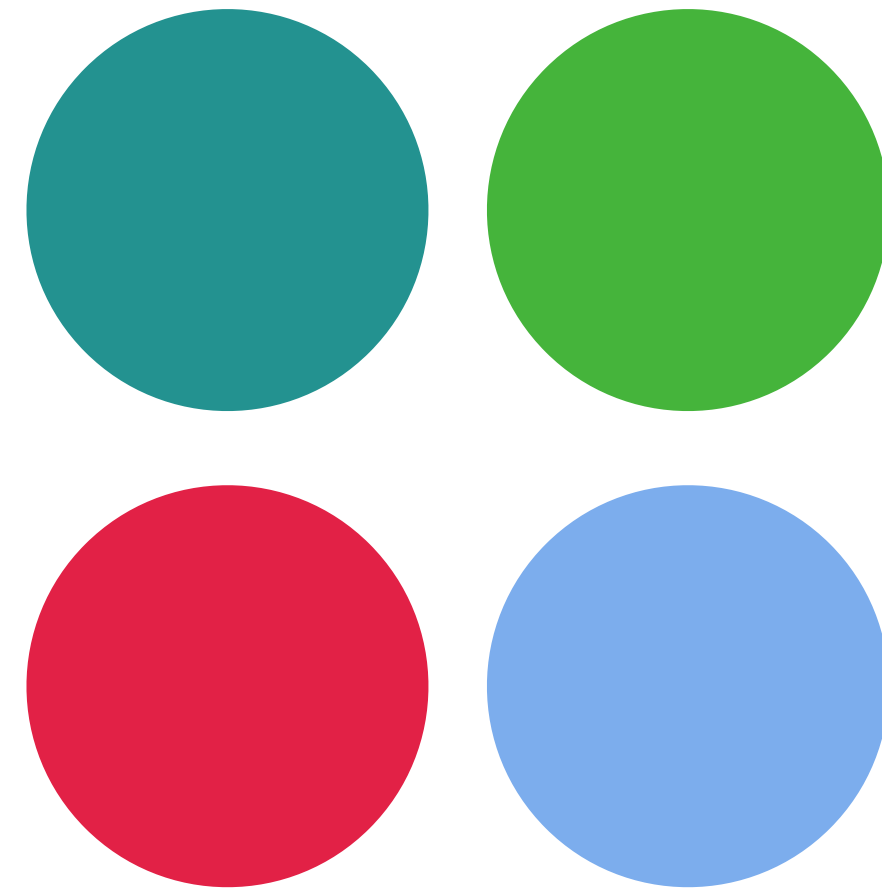
- What does multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary mean?
- Why is the work done in these settings potentially different than in single discipline-focused meetings?
- What kind of multidisciplinary meetings happen in schools?



Disciplinary Perspectives

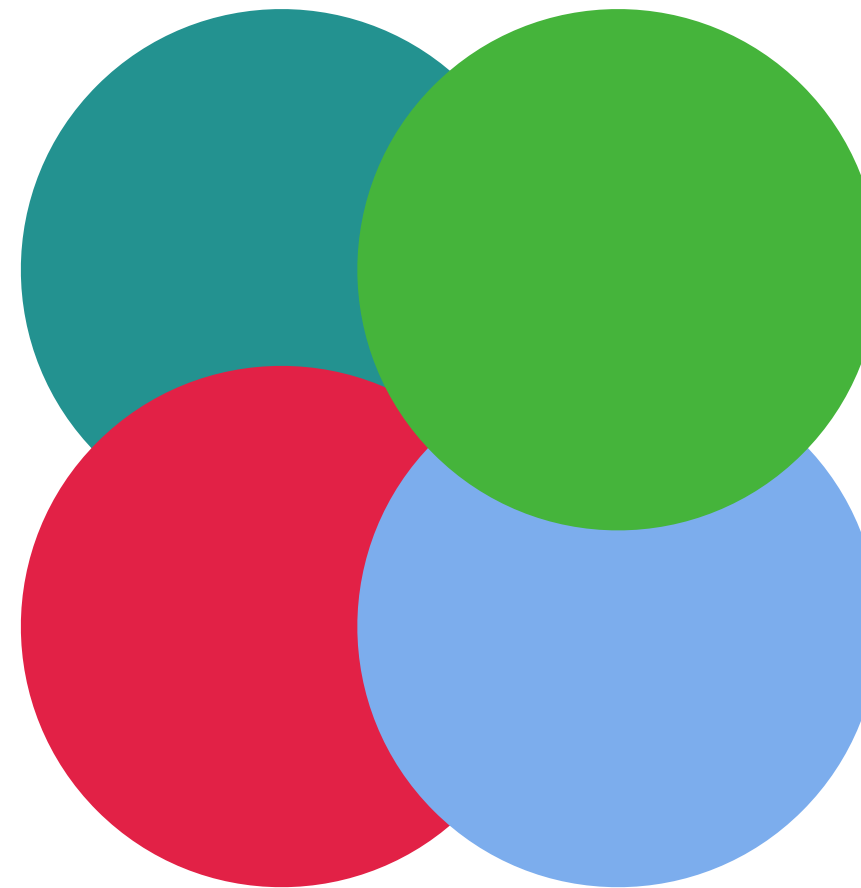
A Type of Progression

Multidisciplinary



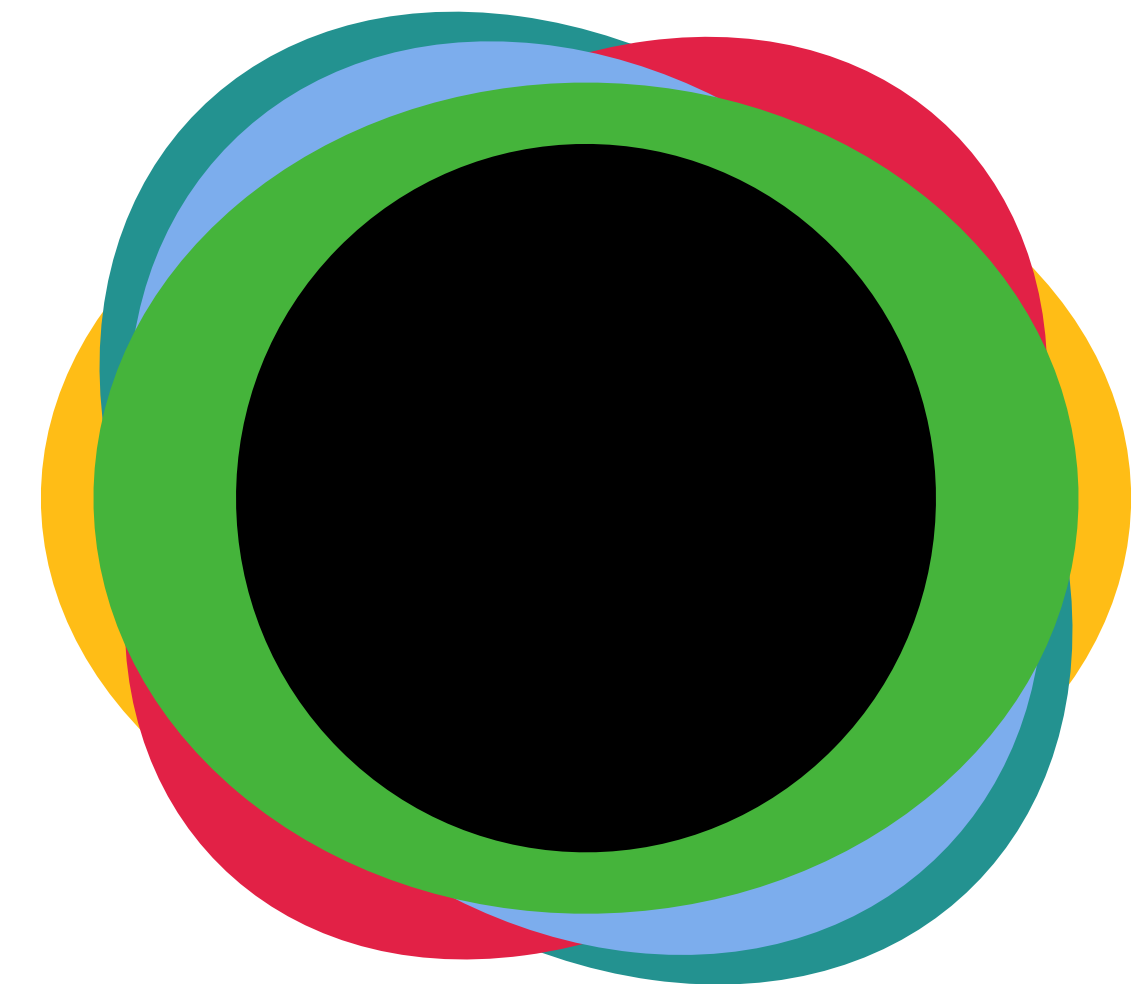
Multidisciplinary draws on knowledge from different disciplines but stays within their boundaries

Interdisciplinary



Interdisciplinarity analyzes, synthesizes and harmonizes links between disciplines into a coordinated and coherent whole

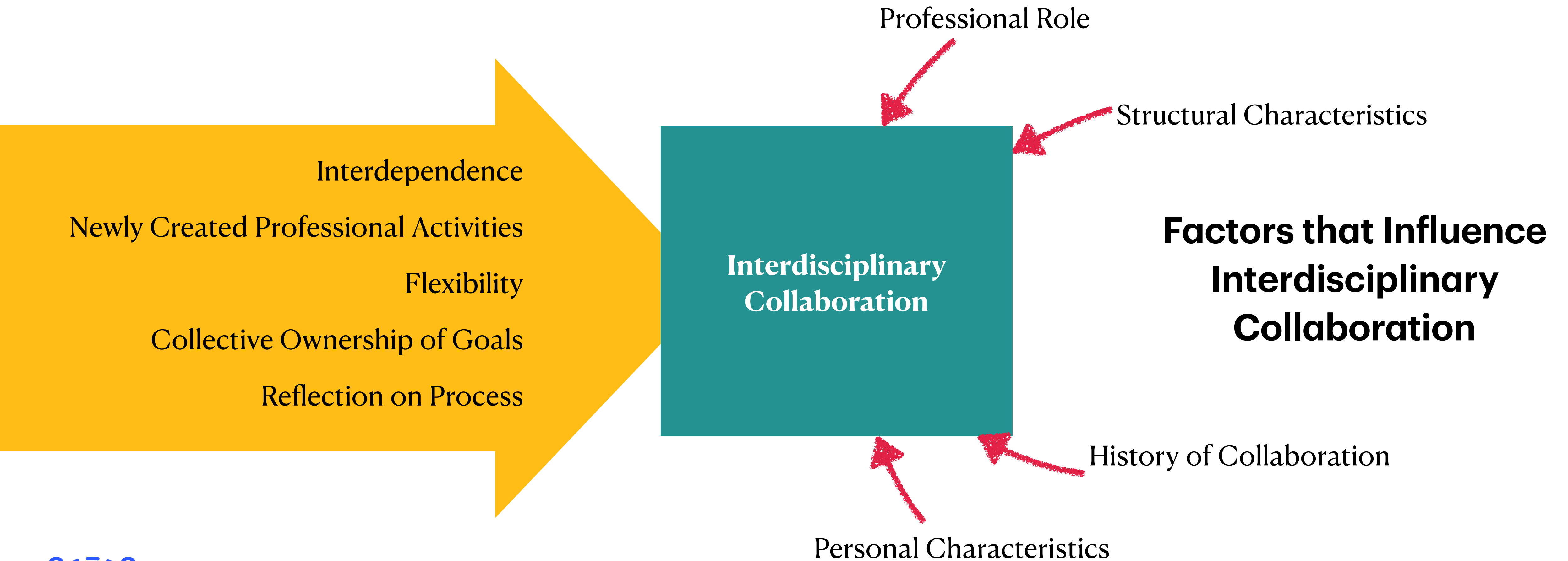
Transdisciplinary



Transdisciplinarity integrates the natural, social and health sciences in a humanities context, and transcends their traditional boundaries



Model for Interdisciplinary Collaboration



A.

H.

O.

U.

B.

I.

P.

V.

C.

L.

A-Z

W.

D.

**What are the skills we need
to be effective collaborators?**

E.

L.

S.

Y.

F.

M.

T.

Z.

G.

N.



How do we develop rappport with

Students
Parents
Teachers
School staff
Community workers



Obstacles to Teamwork

What Makes it Not Work

Interpersonal and Communication Difficulties

- Lack of shared professional language and technologies
- Personality conflicts among team members
- Lack of experience or training in teamwork

Commitment and Leadership Issues

- Divided or conflicted commitment between the team and individual affiliations
- Unclear or unskilled team leadership
- Difficulties resolving conflict

Structural and Organizational Barriers

- -Inadequate organizational/administrative support and resources
- -Limited physical space for team meetings
- Time constraints

Power and Role-Related Challenges

- Continued dominance of higher-status professionals
- Role competition or “turf” issues
- Excessive role blurring or lack of role clarity
- Differential professional socialization processes
- Emphasis on autonomy rather than teamwork in professional education



MTDM Role- Play Scenarios

- Read the scenario and discuss who is going to do what
- Try to follow the situation and stay in character assigned by your role.
- When it is time to switch scenarios, spend a couple of minutes debriefing
- As a facilitator and social worker, I work to collaborate effectively and bring the group to consensus.

Scenario 1: Behavior-Focused Conference (BFC) - Addressing Chronic Disruptive Behavior

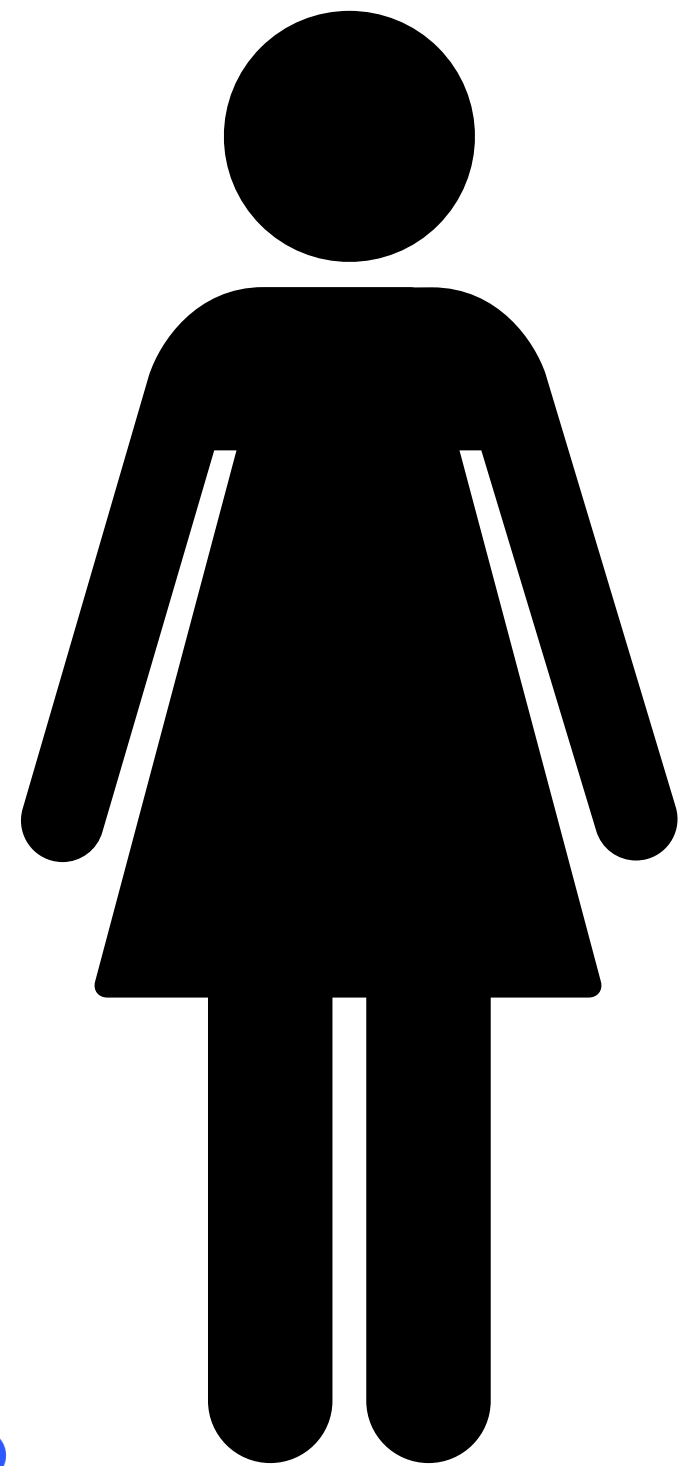
Scenario 2: Tier 1 Team Meeting – Addressing Classroom Disruptions

Scenario 3: IEP Meeting Follow-Up - Reviewing Accommodations & Progress

Scenario 4: Threat Assessment Team Meeting - Addressing Concerns About Student Well-Being



Intersectionality & working w/ diverse team members



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- How can diverse perspectives strengthen a team's ability to support students?
- What challenges can arise when team members have different cultural backgrounds or communication styles?
- How can school teams ensure all voices are valued, especially those from marginalized groups?
- How can social workers promote inclusive policies in schools?

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Ethical Decision-Making Video Presentation

Monday 10/05/26 at 8:00 AM

The purpose of this assignment is to provide students with an opportunity to apply an ethical decision-making framework to a school social work setting. Students will demonstrate skills in analyzing client needs, identifying ethical dilemmas, and making informed decisions in accordance with professional and legal guidelines.

- 10–15-minute video presentation
- Setting Background Information
- Client Case Review (including Evidence-Based Practices and Special Education Services)
- Ethical Dilemma
- Ethical Decision-Making Framework and Application



Ethical Decision-Making Video Presentation Rubric

Description	Highly Developed
Provide strong context and background information about the client setting	The presentation includes a detailed, well-articulated description of the school setting. The client's context is clear and relevant to the case.
Include a descriptive overview of the client's case	The presentation provides an organized and thorough case discussion, demonstrating a deep understanding of the client's needs and challenges.
Identify an ethical dilemma and apply it to a decision-making framework	There is an ethical dilemma that is clearly explained, explaining why it requires consideration. A nuanced discussion of an ethical decision-making framework clearly connects the rationale for decisions.
Special consideration applied to evidence-based practices and special educational needs	Demonstrates a strong understanding of evidence-based practices, providing citations for appropriate literature. Special education law or policies are directly connected to the client's situation.
Professional presentation that is well organized and high-quality	The presentation meets all assignment expectations and is clear, well-structured, professional, and engaging.

